

**Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council Meeting  
Community Meeting  
Friday, March 18, 2016  
Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services  
635 N. 26 St.  
MINUTES  
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**Members Present:**

Linda Davis, Rachel Keith for Senator Alberta Darling, County Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., State Representative LaTonya Johnson, Susan Gadacz, Judge Mary Triggiano, Deanna Alexander, Libby Mueller, State Representative Jessie Rodriguez, Dr. Veneshia McKinney-Whitson, Steve Gilbertson.

Meeting was opened with introductions at 12:00 pm.

**Announcements**

Anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the Partnership Council can apply by submitting an application to the Governor. Applications can be found on Governor Walker's website. Terms for Chris Holmes, Tom Wanta, and Tony Shields will be expiring this year. So far, Mr. Wanta and Mr. Shields have indicated they will be applying to return to the Partnership Council.

State Senator Harris Dodd will not be running for re-election. We will miss her on the Partnership Council.

Ms. Davis announced the death of former Partnership Council member, Tamara Grigsby, and asked that she be remembered for her work for the children and families in our community.

**Minutes**

Minutes from the January 29, 2016 Partnership Council meeting approved.

**New Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services Administrator**

DCF Administrator Eloise Anderson introduced new DMCPs Administrator, Dr. Robin Joseph.

**Presentation of Settlement Agreement**

Hannah Knouse presented the annual 2015 Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement Report. The report includes outcomes of the performance of the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (formerly the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare) from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

Placement Stability is the only remaining enforceable provision of the original 18 provisions of the Settlement Agreement. Per the standards of this provision, 90 percent of children in the custody of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (MCPS) shall have three or fewer placements during the previous 36 calendar months of their current episode in MCPS custody. The percentage for 2015 was 88 percent.

**Response to the Settlement Agreement Report, by Eric Thompson of Children's Rights Inc.**

For the most part, information in the Settlement Agreement is "great news". We have made "enormous progress" since the beginning of the lawsuit when there were 5500 children in out of home care. It is "very encouraging" that the majority of children in out of home care are being protected. This is a testament that the Department is making child safety a priority.

The trend for placement stability is going in the right direction. A corrective action plan is in place to help with this provision of the settlement agreement.

Results for provisions no longer subject to enforcement continue to be monitored and were discussed.

Although some progress is being made in this area, health screens within five business days are not always happening. Annual medical/dental exams are at the lowest rate since 2008.

The number of children in out-of-home care for more than 24 months has been trending up. It was noted that the calculation of the percentage for this provision is based on the original number of 5,533 children in care in 2002. Using the number of children in out-of-home care in 2015 as a baseline, the current percentage would be approximately 29 percent.

The number of children for whom adoption was finalized within 24 months has been creeping downward. The number of children being reunified with parents or caretakers within twelve months of entry into out of home care is trending in the wrong direction.

The number of children reentering the system within twelve months of a prior out-of-home care episode is creeping up.

Per Mr. Thompson, the information in the report indicates that the Division is mostly on the right track. System supports regarding caseloads and staff turnover are trending in the right direction. Caseload sizes and staff turnover rates have both begun going down

DSP Administrator, Fredi Bove, addressed the health issues presented in the Settlement Agreement Report. The Department has spent a lot of time looking at the numbers in the report, and determined that there may be some data integrity issues. Data is dependent on the person entering the information, and numbers may not be as accurate as they should be. We are working on cleaning up data and have entered into a data sharing agreement with the state Medicaid agency.

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The numbers for children in out-of-home care who are getting dental exams are not where we need them to be. However, the number of children who are getting exams is impressive compared to dental service access for Medicaid recipients in general. Children in out-of-home care in Milwaukee and other Care4Kids counties receive annual dental exams at twice the rate of the general population of Medicaid children. DCF is working on a lot of efforts to do even better.

Mike Boeder of Children's Hospital's Care4Kids program discussed some of the issues involved in providing medical/dental care for children in out of home care. Care4Kids has provided a medical home for children in out-of-home care since 2014, and covers Racine, Kenosha, Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, and Milwaukee counties. The majority of kids in CARE4KIDS are from Milwaukee County. Access to dental care for children in foster care is a longstanding and ongoing issue. Care4Kids has been able to add ten dental providers in the last two years, but many dentists are not willing to work with Medicaid patients.

**Dual Status Youth, Fredi Bove**

Dual Status Youth are youth who are over the age of ten who are in the CPS system through a CHIPS order *and* in the Juvenile Justice system through a JIPS or delinquency order.

State standards require monthly face-to-face meetings for youth in non-secure settings either with a CPS or Juvenile Justice Worker. If the child resides in a placement more than 60 miles from their residence, face-to-face contact may be quarterly by the caseworker if the placement facility maintains at least monthly face-to-face contact with the child.

Either Juvenile Justice or Child Protective Services can have the lead role in dealing with dual status youth in non-secure settings. The Juvenile Justice agency can designate a Department of Corrections worker to carry out the monthly visits when a youth is in a correctional setting. Milwaukee does not designate Department of Corrections workers. Rather, child welfare case managers follow the protocol of quarterly case visits.

Question was raised about how we know when a child in secure detention has been abused. Due to the Public Disclosure Law (Act 78), cases must meet the legal criteria for serious injury, egregious incident or death due to maltreatment in order to be made public. Not all cases meet the criteria for public disclosure. Per the direction of Chief Legal Counsel Randall Keys, the

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amount of discussion that could be had and questions that could be answered during this meeting was limited due to the requirements of Act 78 and confidentiality issues.

As of December 2015, all screen-ins and assessments regarding Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake have been centralized. Allegations are processed by DMCPs Access staff. Assessments are being done as Independent Investigations by Community Impact Program (CIP) staff who are also communicating with the host county and law enforcement.

It was suggested that the Partnership Council explore what it can talk about in terms of numbers of cases and allegations involving Dual Status Youth during a Critical Incident Committee meeting or in closed session. It was also suggested that Chief Judge Maxine White be invited to be part of the Critical Incident Committee as well as other pertinent County people.

**From the Bench, Judge Mary Triggiano**

Judge Triggiano continued the discussion of Dual Status Youth and explained that the Milwaukee County Judiciary is looking at the issue of Dual Status Youth and is trying to create something that will really work for these kids. The Judiciary group is working in collaboration with County and State entities, and is working to change the system to be evidence-based. The intent of the Judiciary's work in this area is to become the eyes and ears at the juvenile correction facilities. The group wants to involve Wraparound teams in working on assessing kids, and it also wants to look at alternatives to incarceration. Long term, the goal is to not use the Lincoln Hills model any more. Instead, we need to look at community-based resources and what kind of secure facilities for dangerous kids actually work.

A Healthy Infant Court is being started at Children's Court. This is a collaboration of community agencies and will be taking a science to service approach. A Healthy Infant Court Coordinator has been hired. There will be training on infant mental health for court teams at the end of April.

**Ad Hoc Budget Committee Report, Sue Gadacz**

Members of the Ad Hoc Budget Committee, Sue Gadacz, Linda Davis, Deanna Alexander, Senator Nikiya Harris Dodd and Tony Shields met to discuss the 2017-2019 budget. The group used the meeting to look at opportunities to expand and respond to the information they have received. The committee will also be looking at existing revenues and emerging trends in the

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community. The next Budget Committee meeting will be at the DMCPs office on April 20, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. The Committee hopes to be able to provide budget recommendations to the Partnership Council at the next meeting in May.

**Diversity in Hiring and Recruitment Practices**

Bureau of Human Resources Director, Kim Rahal and HR Program Officer, Veronica Law explained the hiring practices now in place to increase diversity at the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services.

According to the State of Wisconsin Classified Workforce and Affirmative Action Report for fiscal years 2012 and 2014, the Department of Children and Families had the highest percentage of racial and ethnic minorities as compared to all other state agencies in 2012 and 2014. These are the most recent statistics available.

The State requires that all agencies review their job classifications for **underutilization** (when a workforce doesn't match the race or ethnicity of the population). Prior to initiating the new recruitment and selection process in DMCPs, the Department of Children and Families was considered underutilized for racial/ethnic minorities in the Initial Assessment (IA) Specialist job classification. After implementing the new process, DMCPs is no longer considered underutilized for racial/ethnic minorities for this classification.

As part of the new recruiting process, well qualified candidates for the IA Specialist will now possess a four-year or advanced degree in Social Work or a related human services field, or a combination of education **and** professional work experience in a related field

Recruitment efforts have been expanded to include qualified veterans, W-2 candidates and persons with disabilities. Outreach efforts include universities with Social Work programs, including historically black colleges in the Midwest. Social media and in-person recruiting at job fairs are other approaches used to make contact with potential job applicants.

Prior to using the current recruitment process, DMCPs received an average of two to five applicants per month. Since the new process, the 2014 average applicant pool was 203; in 2015 it was 135, and as of the first posting in February 2016 the applicant pool is 291. A center-based exam process is done four or more times per year. Candidates that pass the exam move on to the interview process.

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The improved quality of the recruitment process has enabled the Division to recruit a more diverse, qualified applicant pool from which a more diverse workforce has been hired. As a result of this new recruitment process The Department of Children and families received the Diversity Award in 2014.

**Human Trafficking Task Force**

Secretary Anderson discussed the work of the Human Trafficking Task Force. The Task Force is made up of five work groups, whose members represent a cross section of workers/expertise. These groups include Training, Identification and Screening, Prevention and Public Awareness, Placement and Services, and Data and Research. The formation of the Task Force is the beginning of a new relationship between the Department of Children and Families and the Office of the Attorney General.

**Federal Legislation, Fredi Bove**

Fredi Bove discussed the Family First Act. This is a piece of federal legislation announced by Senators Hatch and Wyden and is still in the development stage. The Family First Act would make IV-E money more flexible for use for prevention. It would also include more restrictions on the use of group homes and residential care centers. It is expected that the Family First Act will be passed by September.

**Community Forum**

Community member asked about children who died while in out of home care and what has been put into place to prevent future deaths. Ann Leinfelder Grove of SaintA will meet with this community member after the meeting to discuss his questions.

Respectfully Submitted

Gail Zellner